

The Quidditch Wars

by Everlasting Faerie Light

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Summary: Nothing could ever beat the unconditional hatred between Cordelia Regan Carrow and James Sirius Potter. Now that they have both been made Quidditch captain of their respective houses, they will stop at absolutely nothing to destroy each other -both on and off the pitch. The Quidditch Wars are about to begin, and things are going to get filthy. James II/OC, Rose/Scorpius

1. Pre-Battle

Quidditch Captain.

I couldn't say that I was surprised. And honestly, nobody else on the team was all too shocked about it either. Who else came up with alternative life-saving strategies in the face of defeat? Who else dedicated extra money and time into making sure that every single broom owned by each individual member of the team was in tip-top condition? Who else could alternate between Quidditch positions with ease when the circumstance called for it? Who else won this team countless matches over the years due to her excellent snitch-catching abilities?

Me, of course.

Cordelia Regan Carrow. Sixth year, long-term seeker, and now Captain of the Slytherin Quidditch team.

Ah, the very sound of it pleases my ears.

And poor Scorpius Malfoy thought he had a remote chance. But I'm afraid that with his mediocre broom-care, failed shots during last year's match against Ravenclaw, and desperation to make himself look pitifully important with his constant bribery, he fell flat on his arse. Poor bloke bit off more than he could chew.

Plus, Scorpius Hyperion Malfoy, Slytherin Quidditch Captain? Don't

make me fucking laugh. Stringing those words together gave me this insane desire to vomit. I'll just have to keep an extra eye on him to make sure that he doesn't attempt to off me over the course of the season. It's the sort of thing that the bugger would do. Slippery git.

"Delia!"

Bollocks.

It was Toothless.

I forgot her real name, but I could distinctly recall her pudgy pink face, leering smile that displayed a missing front tooth (hence the nickname), and that disgustingly nasally voice that had been assaulting my ears all damn day.

And for fuck's sake.

Do.

Not.

Call.

Me.

"Delia."

It's Cordelia.

Cordelia Regan Carrow.

I spun around, not hesitating to glare at Toothless, who was literally in my face, her ugly leer and bulging eyes making me wrinkle my nose.

"Iâ€¦ I just w-wanted to ask you when you were holding try-outs."

Her voice was loud, and caught the attention of several other students who were making their way through the long corridors. I made sure that I was not in the presence of anybody notable or significant; being caught in the company of someone as revolting as Toothless was NOT going to help my reputation.

I narrowed my eyes.

"First of all," I hissed, shoving Toothless backwards, gathering pleasure in the fact that she stumbled. "My name is Cordelia. If you ever call me Delia again, your arse will be manticore bait, do you understand me?"

Toothless gulped as she steadied herself, her large feet shifting so as not to trip over her robes. She nodded, the ugly leer no longer on her face.

"And secondly, what makes you think that you will make it onto my team?" I spat. I couldn't even picture itâ€¦ Toothless? On my Quidditch team? What a revoltingly un-hilarious joke.

Toothless looked miserable and embarrassed. Her cheeks were red and she now had her ugly head down as she stared at her over-sized shoes. "Iâ€¦I justâ€¦wanted to tryâ€¦"

I laughed. Toothless wanted to _try? _

"What will you do? Blunder around on a broomstick, trying to knock out your other tooth with the quaffle so that your face looks somewhat symmetrical? I could easily do that for you right now. All you have to do is ask," I growled, smirking broadly.

Aww, was she crying?

Boo-hoo. Poor wittle Toothless is cwyng because she isn't good enough for pwetty Cordelia.

"I just w-wanted to know the t-timeâ€¦" she choked loudly, her hiccups echoing throughout the corridor. This little spectacle was now the center of attention. Many students were staring blankly at the scene, others were laughing with appreciation, others looked apprehensive and even angryâ€¦

But of course, no one would intervene.

I AM Cordelia Regan Carrow after all.

"Get lost, you sniveling half-blood," I hissed dangerously. She didn't need to be told twice. With another sob, Toothless spun around and lumbered in the opposite direction. I snickered at her retreating figure. And to think that she was going to actually try out for my teamâ€¦

I brushed off the front of my robes just in case there were any lingering Toothless germs within the vicinity of where I was standing before continuing on my way down to the dungeons.

I needed to finish mapping out a basic practical strategy for my team.

Yes, MY team.

My Quidditch team.

Just let me let that sink in again.

â€¦hmmâ€¦

Alright.

Done.

Anywaysâ€¦

I had been working on it for almost a month now, and I knew that with the right players, the cup was as good as ours. With the amount of protective enchantments I had put around the scroll of paper, I doubted that anyone would be able to sabotage or steal my plan, but I did not like to be parted with it for more than a few hours at a

time.

The common room was fairly empty much to my relief. I hated walking in on stupid first-years clogging the couches or fourth-year bints gossiping about Frederick O'Murphy or whoever the Ravenclaw seeker was.

Being back at Hogwarts, standing in the greenish glow of the Slytherin common room, added to my already elated mood. I was back home, and not at that wretched brothel I was supposed to call my house. Here, I could prove myself. I would be the best bloody Quidditch captain that Slytherin has ever seen. My name would be immortal for ages to come. I would make history.

But my imagination would have to wait. I had a Quidditch plan to draft.

Luckily for me, I was on good terms with the other sixth year Slytherin girls in my dormitory.

Eleanora Nott was my woman. Not in a sexual way, mind you, but in an I'm-your-best-mate-and-nothing-can-change-that sort of way. She walked in on me crying in an empty compartment on the train before our first-year started, and we have been best friends ever since. She's the only one that can get away with calling me Delia. Sometimes.

Ophelia Goyle had the right ideas, but happened to be rather stupid. However, she was always fairly good at flying and broom-upkeeping, which put her in my good books. She and Imogen Burke (another Slytherin sixth year) were the best of friends, and their nightly bullshit chit-chat revolving around hormonal seventh year boys made me hex them a fair few times during the course of a single week.

The fifth girl was Cara Flint. She didn't talk much, and when she did, it was to curse the existence of every single muggle-born and Gryffindor within Hogwarts and the wizarding community.

Given that I don't particularly like muggle-borns or Gryffindors either, I've never had any notable problems with Cara.

Except for on Sunday nights, when the girl sits on her arse in front of her open trunk and just stares at it. I shit you not. That is all she does. However, given the fact that I have dealt with this peculiar behavior for almost six years now, it can hardly be seen as a problem.

When I entered the dormitory, it was mercifully empty except for Eleanora, who happened to be lounging on top of her mattress.

"Let me guess. Quidditch plans?" she asked as I dove under my own bed to withdraw a neatly rolled piece of parchment.

I didn't answer as I grabbed a quill from my bag, unrolled the parchment, and immediately started to concentrate.

If the three chasers stay on the left side of the pitch, but disperse at unpredictable intervals when not directly assaultedâ€¦| noâ€¦| not quite rightâ€¦|

"And she's gone," Eleanora chimed.

I glared at her. She was lying on her bed facing me with a twinkle in her large blue eyes, a smirk gracing her lips, her thick dark hair spread over her pillow, and her long legs crossed in an elegant fashion.

If there is one thing that I envied about Eleanora, it was her long legs, which gave her this graceful height. I wished that I could be taller than I was! I was shorter than the average sixteen-seventeen year old girl. But of course, being smaller did have its advantages. Especially when you had to fit into very tight corners to avoid being seen by the enemy during relentless spying sessions.

"Shut it Nott," I snapped. "I am holding tryouts tomorrow at ten AM sharp, and I need to have this plan completed by then."

"Of course. Cordelia Regan Carrow is now the Captain of the Slytherin Quidditch team. How could I have forgotten?" she droned sarcastically, which earned her a pillow to the head.

"Fuck off!" I attempted to snap venomously, but at the sight of Eleanora's face, I couldn't help but smile. It was impossible for me to be angry at her. And that's saying something, because I was known for my grudges.

"You've been working on that bloody plan all morning, and the start of term was only yesterday," she scolded lightly, sitting up to look at me properly. I scowled lightly and turned back to my paper. I'll admit it. I was jealous of Eleanora's beauty in general. I wish my hair could look that luscious all the time.

"You don't understand Quidditch," I barked, making several scratches with my quill.

No. A left-ward focus would not suffice! it would be too predictable!

"No, but I do understand that you need to eat. I was about to go down to get some lunch."

"Good for you," I droned, attempting to tune her out as I continued to make marks on the parchment.

"!Delia, did you even eat breakfast this morning?"

"Cordelia," I growled, though I didn't press the matter as I sucked the tip of my quill. Concentrate, Cordelia, concentrate. You have to assume that not all of your players will be up to par during the first practice!

SMACK.

I felt something fluffy hit the side of my head with surprising force, causing the quill to fly out of my mouth. Something squeaked loudly, and it took me a moment to realize that it was me.

"Arrghhh! Eleanora!" I burst out, immediately chucking the oversized pillow back at her with as much force as I could muster. "What the fuck was that for?"

Eleanora was recovering from the hit, her cheeks a bit pink. She clutched the pillow, a determined look on her face as she yelled, "If you don't go down to lunch with me right now, I will hex you, Cordelia."

I gawked at her expression. Was she fucking serious right now?

"I have important shit to do."

"You need to eat something!"

"I'll eat later."

"No, you won't. I know you. You'll be cooped up here all day working on that bloody plan."

I glared at my best friend as she hopped off of her bed to approach mine. She sat on the edge of it and stared down at me, that determined expression never leaving her face.

"Come oooooonnnnnnn, Cordelia. Please? You're going to need to eat sooner or later, and dinner won't be for another few hours. Plus, don't you want to show off your new badge?"

I stared at her flatly for a long moment.

Fucking Eleanora Nott. I could never say no to her. She was the only person that could make me put Quidditch second, and remind me that I had other stuff to do. Such as schoolwork, eating, sleeping—unimportant stuff like that. I just couldn't refuse that face.

Plus, I DID like to walk around the corridors with the Quidditch Captain badge pinned to my robes.

It wasn't like wearing a prefect's badge. At least I would be noted for being the captain of the best sport in existence rather than for stamping detentions on the arses of students attempting to shag in Moaning Myrtle's bathroom.

Scowling, I rolled up my parchment neatly, tucked it underneath my bed, and waved my wand, ensuring its security. Eleanora beamed as she grabbed onto my arm. I snatched it away from her with a glare, but her smile didn't falter.

I really didn't want to go to the Great Hall. I wasn't hungry, I was impatient. Impatient to finish concocting my strategy. Impatient for ten AM trials tomorrow. Impatient to prove to everyone that Quidditch wasn't something to be taken lightly. I wanted Slytherin glory, and I would settle for nothing short of it—

"You're not going to let Rowle back on the team, are you?" Eleanora asked as we made it to the entrance hall.

I snorted. "He was a joke. I don't know what Avery was playing at by making him beater. I'm glad that he graduated."

Maximilian Avery was the Slytherin Quidditch captain for three years, and though I always found him to be an idiotic slimeball, he absolutely loved me. I was the best seeker he had ever played, and I

always made sure to stay on his good side. Though that did not stop me from offering strategical advice every once and a while. I swear to Merlin I saved our bloody team over twenty times.

Eleanora nodded in understanding. She didn't play Quidditch, but she was a large fan. She claimed that she couldn't play because of her "uneven posterior." I couldn't help but chuckle every time she made that excuse.

"Y'know, I'm pretty sure that he fancied you."

I snorted. "Avery?"

"He got a bludger to the face during that one match against Hufflepuff because he couldn't keep his eyes off you."

"I was pulling a Wronski Feint," I proclaimed proudly. "Of course he couldn't keep his eyes off of me."

Eleanora rolled her eyes, shaking her head with amusement. "You are the least sexual person that I know, Cordelia. Boys do look at you for more than just your Quidditch skills."

Boys.

Boys. Boys. Boys.

And sex.

Is that all girls talked about nowadays?

What was so exciting about hormones anyways? Hormones didn't perform spectacular dives on broomsticks, nor did they make amazing saves or record-breaking snitch catches.

>"Frankly, I don't give a damn," I responded coldly as we entered the great hall.<p>

She sighed. "Of course you don't."

The great hall was filled with chatting students. The noise filled me with an unexpected sense of pride as I puffed my chest out a bit, hoping that the light would glint off of my badge. I ignored Eleanora's smirk.

A few heads turned my way as I walked down the length of the tables, not really intending to find a seat. That's right, fellow Slytherins. Look at your new Quidditch captain. It is I, Cordelia Regan Carrow. I will lead this team to victory, and we will crush everyone else. I will be remembered as the best goddamn captain this school has ever seen. I will beâ€¦|

"Potter alert."

Eleanora's whisper was full of bitterness.

At the warning, I wheeled around to see none other than James Sirius Potter sauntering in my direction, surrounded by a group of admirers.

Every single pore in my body screamed with rage.

Maybe it was the stupid way he ran his hand through his already messy dark hair. Maybe it was that stupid-ass glint in his eyes that suggested that he was superior to everyone else. Maybe it was that roaring, buffoon-like laugh, or his fucking swagger-filled walk. Maybe it was his famous all-Gryffindor, pure-blood hating, heroic family. Maybe it was his tendency to fuck every single girl in this goddamn school.

MAYBE IT WAS THE FACT THAT HE WAS WEARING A BADGE LIKE MINE.

FUCK YOU, POTTER.

FUCK YOU.

I was seething at the sight of him.

I hated a lot of people.

But there was no one I hated more than James Sirius Potter. He and his whole bleeding, blood-traitor, holier-than-thou family.

"Cordelia, it's not worth it," Eleanora whispered in my ear, though I could tell that she was seething almost as much as I was. The two of us have spent many hours trash-talking the Weasley-Potters.

However, it was too late. Potter was in front of me, towering over both Eleanora and I, his friends surrounding him. His eyes narrowed in on me, then on my badge. A dangerous smirk started to play on his lips.

My hand tightened around my wand.

"Decided to show your face after all then, Carrow? Got over the embarrassment of letting me catch the snitch when it was two centimeters from your abnormally sized nose?" he drawled, running his hand through his hair.

Seriously. What did he hope to fucking accomplish by doing that?

It just made him look like a fucking douche-bag. And he really did not need any help in that department.

His words sent another flash of fury through me. He did not need to remind me of the final match that I was trying to forget. And my nose was NOT abnormally-sized.

Now, Potter and I were evenly matched when it came to Quidditch. We've both been seekers for years, and, as hard as it was to admit it, he was a good flier. He and I were the Quidditch enigmas of Hogwarts. While we've joined our house teams, the house cup has switched between Gryffindor and Slytherin for the last few years.

And now, he was the Gryffindor Quidditch Captain, and I was Slytherin's.

Shit got fucking real.

"What did you have to do to become captain, Potter? Did your famous daddy persuade Longbottom with his charms? I'm sure mummy wouldn't be too happy, " I snarled back.

All traces of his smirk had vanished with that last comment. Potter's eyes filled with a cold hatred that matched my own as he bore down on me. However, I stood my ground, craning my neck to look up at him. Everyone seemed to be holding their breath. All attention was now focused on the two of us.

It had always been like this. Ever since Potter had pushed me off my broom during our first flying lesson, causing me to sprain my ankle. It got even worse when we became involved in the Quidditch scene.

He was my mortal enemy. The bane of my existence.

"What did you pay Avery all these years to keep you on the team, Carrow? Broomshed fuck sessions?"

My face reddened at that, and I knew that many would probably take that as confirmation that I did shag Avery on the daily, but those who knew me better—Eleanora and Ophelia for instance—would understand that it was just my lack of sexual experience responding to the comment.

A comment like that from anybody would definitely rile me up, but from Potter—Ohhhhh—it was on a whole new level.

I whipped my wand out and pointed it at his heart, every single cell within my body screaming for his decimation, for his destruction. Oh, I wanted to hurt him. I wanted to see those fucking eyes BURN. And I saw it mirrored on his face as well—the same desire for my downfall, his own wand pointed at my chest.

Eleanora had taken her wand out as well, her eyes narrowed in on some of Potter's friends, who were pointing their own wands in my direction.

"One more word, Potter. Come on. Do it. I dare you," I provoked with relish.

There was a large part of me that loved these fights with the smarmy blood-traitor fucker. I loved to focus all of my anger on one single target. On one enemy. Potter was the perfect candidate, and to make things more beneficial, he always volunteered.

"...Cordelia—just stop. It's not worth it," Eleanora tried again, though I knew that she still had her wand raised.

Potter looked like he was going to oblige, but right at that moment, a voice erupted from the end of the hall.

"What is going on here!? You two! Potter! Carrow! Wands down this instant!"

The voice of Professor Longbottom sobered me up at once. It seemed to break the trance, and all at once, students looked down and resumed their eating and conversing, eager to not be involved in the scene.

Taking a shaky breath, I lowered my wand, eyes still set on Potter, who was still glaring at me with the utmost hatred. The badge on his chest seemed to taunt me maliciously and I wanted nothing more than to rip it off of his robes and thrust it up his nose.

Once Professor Longbottom made his appearance, we both exploded at once.

"She insulted me professor!"

"He provoked me!"

"Psychotic
bitch!"

"Blood-traitor!"

"Fucker!"

"Wanker!"

"STOP!"

I never liked Professor Longbottom. Maybe it was because I hated herbology with a passion, and he happened to be head of Gryffindor house. Oh, and he was a friend of the Potters. Luckily, that didn't stop him from punishing Gryffindors when he felt that it was justifiable.

"Now," he spoke in a rather deadly voice, a disappointed look on his face. "I am letting you two off with a warning. You two were given the privilege of being the Quidditch Captains of your houses, and those privileges can easily be revoked. For now, I am going to take twenty points each from Gryffindor and Slytherin, but if this happens again, I assure you that there will be direr consequences."

He shot an extra look of disappointment in Potter's direction before telling everyone to resume what they were doing. However, once Longbottom was out of earshot, Potter grabbed the front of my robes and pulled me toward him, almost lifting me off my feet so that he could look me directly in the face.

I didn't cringe when our noses were mere centimeters from each other, our glares matching in even animosity.

"I will destroy you, Carrow."

His voice was deadly, laced with a dangerous venom that set my veins on fire.

"See you on the pitch, Potter," I responded.

After another moment of glaring, he released me roughly, causing me to stumble. However, before I could fall over, I steadied myself, watching his retreating figure.

Eleanora was already tugging my arm so that I would no longer be in the limelight, but I paid no attention to her chastising remarks as I took a seat next to her.

So Potter was Quidditch captain.

This was personal.

This was war.

And I had no qualms against playing dirty.

—

****A/N:** So, what do you think? Love it? Hate it? Cordelia may not seem very likable right now, but given her background and overly-conceited traits, she's bound to attract some haters. Ah well. Characters grow, yes? And she certainly will. ******

****Also,** when I reference Toothless, I'm not making a reference to 'How to Train Your Dragon.' I hope that there is absolutely no confusion there, but just in case, the name 'Toothless' belongs to the creators of that movie. ******

2. The Failed Mission

"WHAT?"

I didn't give a damn if my roar of outraged contempt scared a group of ickle firsties lounging on one of the couches in front of the common room fireplace. Not when Scorpius Malfoy was glaring down at me, looking like he wanted nothing more than to sock me in the face.

Well, news flash, mate. I felt the same way.

And as much as I wanted my stare of doom to be the cause of Malfoy's sudden eruption into flames, he wasn't the reason why I was so angry. Well, not directly.

"You sound like a bloody banshee," he snarled, his lips curling in disgust. I ignored the insult. There were more important dilemmas to address.

"You're lying, you miserable twat," I spat. "You've got your knickers all bunched up because I was made Quidditch captain and you weren't."

Yes, that had to be it. I always knew that Malfoy would try to jeopardize my captaincy in some quasi-diabolical way. And this was attempt number one. Ha! How fucking weak.

His grey eyes narrowed dangerously and he advanced towards me until we were only a few inches apart. It really did not work to my advantage that all of my enemies were giants, and had the habit of emphasizing that fact by standing unnecessarily close to me. Nevertheless, I stood my ground. I wasn't one to show fear in the face of someone so pathetic.

"You better watch yourself, Carrow. With a mouth like yours, you're just asking for trouble, and there'll be no one there to save your arse." His voice was cold and dangerous, and even I couldn't help but gulp in apprehension.

When I didn't respond, he took a step back, though his eyes were still fixated on me with strong dislike. "And why would I lie about this? I've always been a part of the Slytherin Quidditch team and I want to see Gryffindor crushed just as much as you do. I'm telling you this for your benefit, though you don't deserve it."

I scoffed. I didn't trust him, but blondie had a point. If he were trying to fuck with my authority, he would definitely stoop to more unorthodox means. However, I still deemed Malfoy untrustworthy.

But that didn't matter right now. What mattered was that Saint Potter had made special arrangements to book the Quidditch team tomorrow morning at ten AM sharp. The same bloody time that I had originally booked my team's practice. This could not have been a coincidence. I was ensured by Professor Hendricks himself that I was the first captain to book the pitch. I was even applauded for my dedication and enthusiasm.

And of course, Sergeant dark-haired douchebag had to sweep in with that oversized head of his and somehow pull the strings so that he and his pack of fuck-faced, mudblood breeding bitches could muck up my pitch. How the hell was that fair?

"So, Potter really did book the pitch for tomorrow morning?" I asked grudgingly, crossing my arms. I really didn't want Malfoy to be right for a number of highly valid reasons.

"Are you deaf? Yes, Potter booked the pitch for tomorrow morning. I heard him harping about it in the entrance hall." He pinched the bridge of his nose in agitation, looking like he wanted nothing more than to drop kick me out the common room window and into the black lake.

"What if he was lying?" I shot back.

But that still scared me. Even if he was lying, how could he have known about the time of my practice? I made sure to keep it a secret... only spreading the news to a few veteran Quidditch players and trusting them to tell only those who had serious potential. That meant no bratty first years or hormone-infested fourth years. Second and third years I could deal with...as long as they actually knew what they were doing. And if Potter knew about the time of my practice, did that mean that he somehow had access to my practice strategies? The very idea made my blood run cold.

I had to know what he was doing.

"Malfoy, I have a job for you."

It was a bit low and immature, even for Quidditch, but desperate times called for desperate measures. Plus, we were Slytherins. We knew how to sneak.

He rose an eyebrow at me. "And what makes you think I'll do anything for you?"

I gritted my teeth in frustration. Merlin, please give me the self-restraint NOT to hex him. "Look, just hear me out. I need you to spy on their practice. It's really not that big of a deal, I just

need to know what Potter's up to. Can you do that for me?"

Malfoy's gaze was flat, his lips curling into an amused grimace. "You can't just ask people to do things for you, Carrow. Especially after you've treated them like utter doxy shit."

I breathed out through my nose, willing myself not to throttle the bastard. Couldn't he see just how important this was?

"Do it for the team," I snapped at him, my meager patience waning. I was never really a patient person. Patience was reserved for those pushovers in Hufflepuff.

He snorted. "You have to do better than that, 'Delia."

I twitched violently at his use of my nickname, but I willed myself not to and shove my wand into his eye socket.

"I will ensure you a spot on the team. You don't even need to try out," I burst out. It wasn't that much of a bargain. Malfoy was a very good player after all. Not as good as me, of course, but still good in comparison to all the other idiots that usually infest tryouts.

"Why can't you do it yourself?"

"Because I have to fix this mess first thing tomorrow morning. I have to book the pitch for a different time and possibly even re-think my practice strategy. That might take a while."

In all honesty, I just didn't want to waste my time spying on a pack of Gryffindors. That job was reserved for the lower branches of my team.

He was silent for a moment, the greenish, watery glow coming from the windows drawing shadowy patterns on his pale cheeks. He tilted his head slightly in contemplation and I held my breath, glaring at him both out of impatience and desperation.

Finally, after what seemed like a lifetime, he chuckled ever so slightly. "I want to be co-captain."

... What?

Co-captain? Co-fucking-captain?

"No," I deadpanned without a single second of hesitation. There was no such thing as a co-captain in Quidditch. There was ONE captain, and ONE captain only. And I happened to be that captain. Malfoy could kiss my arse.

"Then I'm not doing shit for you." He gave a little shrug, that stupid smirk still playing on his lips.

"Then you're not flying," I snapped back. "You can kiss your Quidditch career good-bye."

It was my turn to wear a smug-ass smirk of victory. I watched Malfoy's devious smile disappear, a murderous glare taking its place. His eyes flashed dangerously, and I knew that I had hit a nerve. I

clutched my wand just in case the fucker decided to become a human firework and use me as a target.

"I ought to punch you right now, you little bitch," he snarled, the corner of his lip twitching menacingly.

"That would make you look wonderful, wouldn't it? Punching a girl who's half your size and who also happens to be captain of your house's team. I'm sure that you'd find banishment from Quidditch, as well as a handful of detentions quite enjoyable."

Malfoy looked as if he had swallowed something extremely unpleasant. He curled and uncurled his fists, as if trying extremely hard to prevent some sort of horrific beast from ripping out of his chest. I just tucked a stray sandy-blonde lock of hair behind my ear and watched him struggle. I had him right where I wanted him.

"Fine. I'll do it. But you owe me, Carrow. You fucking owe me." His voice was hoarse with anger, and a few of the frightened first years quickly made their way to the dormitories, no longer wanting to be in the presence of angry Quidditch players. He had his finger pointed straight at me, his eyes slits of stormy grey.

I smiled at him. "Ten o'clock sharp, Malfoy. And don't get caught. Oh, and while you're at it, tell the others that tryouts are off tomorrow."

**

"Malfoy? You chose Malfoy of all people to spy on Potter?"

The dormitory washroom was dimly lit, with cold stone floors that made me wish I had worn socks. The windows offered nothing but a pitch black view into the lake, and the torch fires along the walls sent a rather weak light across the toilet stalls. I didn't really care that much in the end, but the Slytherin girls always complained about the horrible lighting in the bathrooms. And I understood why.

I squinted my eyes slightly as I examined my reflection in the mirror, running my hand through my mass of frizzy sandy-blonde hair. The flickering flames cast shadows across my pale skin, and my hazel eyes glittered poignantly back at me. The lighting really was horrible.

Eleanora stood beside me, looking at her own reflection with apparent agitation as she attempted to siphon the make up off of her face with her wand. She would literally have to press her nose against the mirror in order to properly examine her skin for any spots she may have missed.

Again, I digress.

Better. Fucking. Lighting.

Now.

Constantly casting Lumos wasn't going to cut it.

"Yeah, so?" I shot back stubbornly.

"Well, don't you think he's...er...a bit of a slimy git?" Eleanora asked, finally abandoning the act of removing her make up and turning her body to face me, arms crossed, a look of skepticism on her face.

I yanked on a lock of my hair. The pain shot through my skull, and I liked it.

"Whatever. He offered."

"It sounds like you forced him, Cordelia."

"So?"

"I just think you could have chosen someone a bit more trustworthy, that's all." She shrugged.

"I had to think quick. I didn't have time to find somebody else. Malfoy gave me the information, and he happened to be standing right in front of me. Therefore, he was tasked with finding out more about what General Mudblood-loving doofus is up to on the pitch."

Eleanora sighed. "I really wish you'd stop using that word."

I ignored her, staring stubbornly at my reflection. My eyes really did look disconcerting with this lighting. I blinked a few times before proceeding to unbutton the top two buttons of my nightgown.

"And honestly, Cordelia. Is sending someone to spy on Potter really necessary?" Eleanora asked as she pulled her dark hair back into a ponytail.

I snapped. Was she fucking crazy? Had she not been listening to me rant for the last fifteen minutes about how Potter was out to get me? That he purposely scheduled his practice at ten AM long after I had already booked the bloody pitch? And if he had the power to do that, then he probably knew something about my top-secret practice strategies. He was just as dedicated to Quidditch as I was; I wouldn't put it past him to have spies in lurking around the common room.

"Are you deaf, Nott? He's onto me. I can't take any chances!" I seethed.

"Don't you think you're just being a bit paranoid? What if it's just a coincid-"

"DON'T YOU DARE TELL ME THAT IT'S A FUCKING COINCIDENCE!" I burst out, slamming my fists against the sides of the sink in front of me. Bad decision. It bloody hurt.

"Keep it down. You're going to wake the whole dormitory," Eleanora replied calmly, apparently unmoved by my outburst as she continued to examine her reflection.

I shook my hands out, trying not to give off the impression that I was in pain. Instead, I took a few deep calming breaths to steady myself.

"I'm going to bed," I stated flatly with one last disdainful look at my reflection. There was nothing more to say about the subject. All that could be done was to change up the strategy before any real damage occurred, and wait to hear back from Malfoy about the Gryffindor developments on the pitch.

"G'night," mumbled Eleanora distractedly as she tried once again to siphon off the make up.

I exited the washroom, my feet feeling numb from the unforgiving stone floors. The dormitory was almost pitch black, but I resisted the urge to cast Lumos to find my bed. I wasn't in the mood to deal with bitchy sixth year girls awoken from their slumber.

I felt around until I managed to grasp a handful of blankets lying on top of my bed. I climbed on top of it before bundling myself up and squeezing my eyes shut. Unfortunately, I wasn't the only one still awake.

"Do you think he likes me?"

"He totally does. You should've seen the way he looked at you during herbology."

"I wonder if he'd be down to shag in the forbidden forest."

"Why the forbidden forest?"

"I like the sense of danger. It would be really intense -EEP!"

Two intertwining squeals of shock erupted from both Ophelia Goyle and Imogen Burke as a blast of red light shot out from the end of my wand, causing the glass vase sitting on top of the bedside table separating their two beds to shatter into a million pieces.

"Shut the FUCK up, both of you!" I snarled, wand still pointed in their direction.

After a moment of shocked silence, Ophelia's angry whisper broke through the darkness. "Go get laid, Cordelia. You obviously need it."

I just scoffed and closed my eyes again. I wasn't in the mood for a row. And luckily, neither were the other two, for their sex-drenched conversation came to an end.

Eventually, I drifted off into an uneasy sleep chalk-full of dreams that featured Potter on a broomstick as he flew right at me, wand outstretched, an evil grin on his face as he laughed at my demise...

"Cordelia!"

What the fuck? Since when were Potter and I on a first-name basis? Did he seriously expect me to start calling him James? Because that was NOT going to happen.

"CORDELIA!"

My eyes flew open and I flailed my arms wildly, hoping that I would physically injure the goddamn dolt who decided that it would be a good idea wake me from my slumber. Unfortunately, the perpetrator caught my arm before I could even get in a good smack. Eleanora rolled her eyes as I struggled to free my arm from her grasp. I glared at her, wishing that a handful of doxies would erupt from her ears and fly up her nose. She yanked me upwards out of the bed, causing me to yell in surprise as I stumbled oh-so-gracefully and met the stone floor with a loving embrace.

"Arghh, you bitch!"

"It's already ten. If you don't hurry, you're going to miss breakfast," Eleanora said with that nagging tone of hers. "I already got your robes out. Get a move on."

"Hold on. The floor and I are having a moment," I snapped, my voice muffled due to the fact that my face was literally glued to the hard stone. Hopefully I wouldn't have a fat bruise on my forehead later. I managed to push myself up, rubbing the remnants of sleep from my eyes.

"And I'm not going to breakfast. I have business to take care of," I said as I got to my feet and brushed myself off.

Eleanora looked outraged. I'll admit that she even scared the shit out of me when she was angry. "And why not?"

"I have to go to Professor Hendricks to reschedule Quidditch tryouts," I mumbled, avoiding eye contact with her as I stripped out of my nightwear and proceeded to change into my robes.

"Oh, no you don't. You have plenty of time to do that. We have a free period after breakfast!"

"Stop bossing me around," I shot at her, though my voice didn't have its usual heat. Eleanora was the only person in this world that had this sort of power over me.

"No, you shut up. You're going to breakfast, and you're not leaving that table until you've had enough to eat."

"But-"

"Nope."

"I-"

"Not a chance."

I groaned in frustration. "Fine. I'll eat some fucking toast if it makes you so happy."

"Toast AND eggs."

"Yeah, yeah, whatever."

Once I had managed to get my robes on, brush my teeth, and clean my face, Eleanora and I headed upwards out of the deserted common room,

making our way to the great hall.

The long tables were all toppled with heaps of toast, eggs, hash-browns, bacon, and other breakfast foods. The aroma made my stomach growl, and I couldn't help but be thankful that Eleanora had dragged me here before it was all gone. The chatter of students echoed throughout the hall, and the sky overhead marked a clear blue sky. I scowled. Perfect Quidditch conditions. Fuck Potter and his Gryffies for stealing my pitch.

Eleanora and I found empty spots at the Slytherin table, and I immediately began piling my plate full of toast, eggs, and bacon before eating ravenously. Holy mother of Merlin, it was so good. When was the last time I had had a decent meal? I skipped dinner last night to work on my Quidditch strategy (much to Eleanora's dismay), and I barely ate anything at lunch...

I expected Eleanora to make some smug remark about my current state of hunger, but she was oddly silent. When I looked up, I saw that she had a slightly dazed expression on her face, her eyes fixed on something. I followed her gaze and saw that it was directed at the Hufflepuff table.

"Er... Eleanora?"

She didn't respond.

I snapped my fingers in front of her face. "Oi! Earth to Nott!"

"W-what?" Her head snapped in my direction, a look of confusion on her face. She hadn't even touched her food yet.

I snorted. "Daydreaming about taking one of the Puffers for a ride?"

She let out a laugh. "Shut up, Cordelia. I was just distracted." With that, she started to nibble meagerly on the crust of her toast, her eyes fixed to her plate.

I rolled my eyes. I could've been a bitch and started lecturing her about not eating her food for a change, but I was too lazy and hungry to even come up with something clever to say.

I was so busy shoveling down a second helping of sausages that I hadn't even noticed the cluster of owls swooping into the great hall, nor the letter that landed on the left side of my plate next to Eleanora.

"Er... Cordelia?"

"Mmmpphhh?"

"You have a letter."

I paused, swallowing a massive mouthful of sausage sandwich before glancing at the letter. Immediately, I felt rather sick. I recognized that handwriting. I put my fork down, oblivious to the other students opening their mail or scanning the newest edition of the Daily Prophet.

"I don't want to read it."

"Cordelia..."

"No."

Eleanora sighed. She grabbed the envelope gently and examined it briefly before looking back at me. I didn't meet her eyes.

"You should read it. It could be important."

"Nothing they have to say is worth a damn to me."

I clenched my fists, gritting my teeth. My appetite was gone, and I wished that I hadn't eaten so much food.

"They wouldn't mail you unless it was something somewhat important. We both know that," she pressed on.

With a scowl, I snatched the letter from her hand and ripped it open. Why did Eleanora have to always be fucking right? That bitch. I glared at the print on the piece of parchment, inwardly cursing the rather sloppy writing that suggested a trembling hand.

Cordelia,

The house is in ruins and will take a few months to repair, even by magic. Your father had another fit, but I'm sure he'll snap out of it eventually. I had to go to St. Mungo's for a few days, but it wasn't too bad this time. I'm fine. I want you to stay at school for the winter holidays. You should be able to come home for the summer. The house should be repaired by then.

Stay safe,
>Mum<p>

Now I really felt sick. I clamped my mouth shut and tore my eyes from the letter. I couldn't bear to look at it for a second longer.

Like hell I wanted to come home. The very fact that she even suggested it made my insides burn with fury. How could that goddamn woman just sit there and...and... No. I didn't want to think about it. I couldn't bear to think about it. She was a coward. A no-good excuse for a bitch, and she was just as bad as my father.

I choked as my father's face swam before my eyes. I squeezed them shut.

"Cordelia..."

Without another word, I thrust the letter into her face. Eleanora hesitated for a moment before taking the parchment with delicate hands. I couldn't look at her face as she read the contents of the letter. I stared at nothing in particular as I did everything in my power to not think about that wretched house and all of its dingy, overly-used hiding places. I didn't want to think about my mother's gaunt, pale face as she scampered through the house hopelessly like a stray dog.

My stomach churned. I would welcome any distraction. Anything...

I dared to look at Eleanora, who was folding the letter in half. Her face was pale as she studied me.

"Stay with me and my aunt. You don't have to go back there."

"Eleanora..."

"You can live with me permanently. We have a spare bedroom. Hell, if you want, you can even share a room with me."

I couldn't help it. Her words sent a wash of relief over me. It was one of the reasons why I let her read the letters from home, because she always knew how to comfort me. It wasn't that she said anything particularly special or encouraging...but just having Eleanora here with me was enough.

But that didn't mean I was going to fucking break down into some emotional, sappy mess in the Great Hall with a shit-load of onlookers.

I reached out and placed a hand on her shoulder. I smiled.

"Shut it. Your Hufflepuff is showing," I said. My stomach was no longer churning and the dank images of both that awful house and my parents were already fading away, succumbing to nothingness.

Eleanora smiled back tenderly before eyeballing the letter in her hands. With a dignified huff, she ripped it in half, then in quarters. "Out of sight, out of mind."

She crumpled up the remnants of the letter and stuffed them in the pocket of her robes.

I was spared the chance to express further gratitude when the empty seat opposite us was suddenly occupied by a graceful, red-headed girl with striking blue eyes and a dangerously suspicious smirk on her face.

Nexiana Montague. Seventh year Slytherin girl with curves in all the right places, and a rack that could even make those stubbornly innocent Ravenclaw book-aholics think dirty thoughts.

I never liked her.

She didn't speak much, but when she did, everything she had to say always antagonized me. And it wasn't because I disagreed with everything she said. It was her tone. She just sounded like a patronizing bitchzilla who had this sadistic desire to take a large shit on a person's opinion. The only reason why I bothered to have any interaction with her was because she was one hell of a beater. With her on the pitch, the bludger almost never missed a target. But that might be because the other team's players were lost in a mental sea of double-D tits.

Eleanora's eyes narrowed dangerously. While I simply disliked

Nexiana, Eleanora detested the living fuck out of her. I never really cared to ask why.

"Why the fuck are you here?" Eleanora shot out before I had the chance to speak.

"Go die, Nott," Nexiana responded almost lazily as she tucked a loose curl behind her ear. I was almost blinded by how the light reflected off that fiery hair of hers.

"Don't talk to her like that," I snapped immediately.

Nexiana's smirk grew, but she didn't bother to respond. Instead, she placed her elbow on the table, rested her chin on her hand, and focused her eyes on me. "So when are Quidditch tryouts, Carrow?"

Her voice. Her goddamn voice. My eye twitched as I stabbed a piece of sausage on my plate.

"Soon." My voice was clipped. I wanted her to go away before she made me feel stupid...or before Eleanora combusted into a fiery explosion of hatred. One or the other.

"Hmm. No date? Are my ears deceiving me? Cordelia Regan Carrow, devoted captain of the Slytherin Quidditch team, doesn't even have a set date for tryouts? My, my. I expected better."

I resisted the urge to take my plate off and smash it into her pretty little face. I knew that there was a reason why Nexiana was here. We never really talked off the pitch.

"What the hell do you want?" I snapped, gripping my fork harder than usual. I stared her down, refusing to break eye contact. For some reason, Nexiana was one of those people that I tried to avoid conflict with. I didn't understand it myself, but something about her struck me as significantly out-of-bounds in the nemesis department.

Nexiana repositioned herself so that she was sitting upright. She flipped her hair over her shoulder, her eyes glinting maliciously.

"So, I'm under the impression that you sent our dear friend Scorpius to go spy on Potter's tryouts this morning," she said, her voice coated with laced honey. It made me cringe.

My stomach turned. How did she know that Malfoy was supposed to be stalking the Quidditch pitch right now? Did she see him? Stupid as he was, I thought that he was sneakier than that.

"So what if I did?" I forced out, trying my best to keep the panic out of my voice.

Nexiana let out a little snicker. "Well, news flash, darling. Malfoy was just sent to the hospital wing. Something about being attacked by a group of enraged Gryffindor Quidditch players."

I dropped my fork.

"WHAT?"

I didn't care if my outburst caused many heads to turn in my direction.

"That's right. If I were you, I'd take a bit of time to cover my tracks better. Then we could avoid situations like this. Have fun, Captain Carrow." Just as suddenly as she had dropped the bomb, she got to her feet, sent a saucy wink in Eleanora's direction, and sauntered off.

My hands were shaking.

This was not good. If they found out that Malfoy was spying...

I jumped to my feet, knocking over my breakfast plate as I did so. "I have to go to the hospital wing."

I felt like a madwoman. My thoughts were going at a million miles per hour, and I had absolutely no regard to how ridiculous I looked or sounded.

Eleanora got up as well, albeit in a more graceful manner. There was apparent panic in her eyes. "If Malfoy was caught, then..."

"Let's go." I grabbed her hand, and the two of us bolted in between the tables. I had to see Malfoy. I had to know what condition he was in, see if I could get any information out of him, ask him how he was caught and what they said and what Potter was doing...

This was bad. This was really bad.

If Malfoy was caught red-handed, then the connection would immediately be made. I was now Potter's living, breathing target.

I knew that it would probably resort to some sort of house warfare, but I didn't want it to happen as a result of some careless blunder on my part.

Due to my athleticism, I managed to hurl myself through the castle, up the stairs, and down the long corridors with ease. Eleanora on the other hand was having a hard time.

"Can we please slow down?" she gasped as we passed by a painting of three warlocks, who paused their card game to glance at us curiously.

"No!" I snapped. "We're almost there."

Then, with one final burst of energy, we literally hurled ourselves into the hospital wing. I lost my balance and fell flat on my face while Eleanora stumbled violently from the force of my grasp and tripped over my body.

Our oh-so-graceful entrance was greeted by the angry voice of Madame Sullivan.

"This is a place of rest and healing! I will not have two inconsiderate students come bursting into my infirmary in such a manner!"

My whole body ached as I pushed myself from the floor, finding myself face to face with the batshit healer, eyes narrowed dangerously, and her right hand clutching what looked like a bottle of Skele-gro.

Despite the fact that I was in a hurry, I couldn't help but shudder. I never liked the hospital wing. Its bright walls and vast, open windows always made me uneasy. Not to mention the beds with their unnaturally white comforters and fluffy pillows made me feel less than welcome. It didn't help that Madame Sullivan looked like a ghostly nun with satanic intentions.

"Is Scorpius Malfoy here?" I burst out breathlessly.

"Yes he is," Madame Sullivan responded in a clipped tone. "And he needs rest. So if you two don't mind..."

"I need to speak with him."

"That is out of the question! He's been seriously injured and he does not need interrogation..."

I did not have fucking time for this. I almost growled in frustration as I tugged at a chunk of my hair in agitation.

"It will only be a for a little while, I swear. But it's urgent," I attempted, trying to keep the panic in my voice at bay. I could still hear Eleanora trying to catch her breath behind me.

Madame Sullivan and I engaged in an intense stare down for a few moments before she finally relented with a sniff. "Fine. I'll give you ten minutes and ten minutes only. Then I want you two out of my hospital. He's in the last bed on the left."

With that, she retreated to her office. I wasted no time in making my way to said bed, where I saw Malfoy propped up on a few pillows.

Fuck.

He was conscious, but in pretty bad shape.

His face was pale and sweaty, and his left eye was bruised and swollen shut. A shit-load of bandages were wrapped around his chest and torso in a failed attempt to cover the thick, purple pus-filled pustules that infested his skin. And to top it all off, his left leg was elevated, and on his calf, there were thick black slimy tentacles protruding from the skin, writhing in nauseating agitation.

I almost gagged at the sight of him, and Eleanora gasped behind me.

"Did you find out anything?" I burst out.

He scowled. "I'm doing just fine. Thank you for asking."

"This is horrible!" Eleanora burst out, her hand covering her mouth, eyes wide. "How could they do this to you?"

I resisted the urge to snort. I didn't have time for a sob session

over Malfoy's injuries.

"How did they find you?" I persisted.

Malfoy shot a contemptuous glare in my direction before shaking his head. "You're such a piece of shit, Carrow."

"Answer me," I almost roared.

He cringed ever so slightly, but shot me another look of loathing before explaining himself.

"I didn't even see it coming. I thought that I had managed to cast a pretty good disillusionment charm on myself. But I was attacked right after the tryouts ended. I didn't even get to see them practice."

My insides burned with bitter disappointment. So I still didn't know if Potter knew of my Quidditch strategies or not. Malfoy had managed to achieve absolutely nothing besides instilling a new-found bloodlust within the Gryffindor Quidditch team. I felt even less sorry about his injuries.

"So...so, they just attacked you all at once?" Eleanora asked.

"Not they. It was one person. Rose Weasley."

Now that caught my attention.

Rose fucking Weasley? The fifth year red-headed bookworm? The blood-traitor bitch who purposely set my robes on fire during third year Defense Against the Dark Arts? Her temper was famous, but what the hell was she doing on the Quidditch pitch?

"Why was she there?" I burst out.

"Turns out she's one hell of a flier. One of the best I've seen. I guess she tried out for a chaser position this year and got it," he responded grimly before giving a hacking cough. The sound made me cringe.

"And she did all of this to you by herself?"

If that much was true, than having Rose Weasley on the pitch would be extremely dangerous. I would have to do something about her.

"Yeah. Nobody else on the team did anything to physically harm me. But I was found out. They all started yelling and cursing and both Potter and his brother were absolutely furious. One of the bigger guys took me to the hospital wing. He threatened me...saying that I would have a hard time walking in the future if I so much as ratted them out. Not that I was planning to. Good thing Sullivan doesn't ask questions." He coughed again, and this time, a mixture of blood and saliva came dribbling down his chin.

"But you've got to tell someone about this! This is despicable!" Eleanora burst out.

But I understood Malfoy's reluctance. Even though Eleanora liked Quidditch, she didn't understand how dirty it could be. We Quidditch players didn't go crying to a professor when we were grievously

injured by a member of another team. That's not how it worked. Well, unless you were a smarmy Hufflepuff.

No, we Slytherins got even.

Plus, I doubted Malfoy wanted to openly admit to be being bested by a girl. Let alone, Rose Weasley.

"One more thing, Carrow," he said as he weakly wiped the blood from his chin. He looked me straight in the face, his non-swollen eye flashing with both apprehension and anger.

"Potter. He's after you. Right now."

And as if on queue, the door to the hospital wing burst open, and in came James Sirius Potter, a look of unadulterated hatred on his face. With one fluid motion, he pointed his wand at Madame Sullivan's door, muttered, "Muffliato!" and then redirected it straight at me.

"Your miserable arse is mine, Carrow."

And before I could blink, a jet of red light was making its way straight towards my face.

End
file.